

Blue Just got Better!





The latest S8 model from LRP is the NXR that replaces the outgoing BXR Evo model. A new name means that this is more than an update, but an all-new platform

LRP has released a few of their S8 1:8 off-road buggies in the past in varying different levels of specification. The last variation (the S8 BXR Evo) clearly showed the direction LRP were intending to go, so in the last few years they've been busy designing an all-new car ready for the 2014 World Championships. Its overall design is supposed to give the car the 'perfect drive-ability' compared to previous models and so they have spent more time perfecting the geometry and using the right materials for each and every part.

QUALITY

As soon as the box is opened you can see from the parts in the bags that this is a top-end professional race kit. It oozes quality engineering with every part, taking their 1:8 project to a completely different level. During the build we couldn't believe how easy everything went together. All the parts just fell into place with ease and precision - nothing had to be manipulated or trimmed to fit and it was a joy to build.

DRIVETRAIN

The NXR comes with the industry standard geared differentials in the front, centre and rear gearboxes. The front and rear diffs are identical, but interestingly the centre diff has a larger casing holding a greater capacity of oil to help distribute the torque reliably to the front and rear. It comes with pre-built centre CVD driveshafts with UJ-type driveshafts connecting each of the drive axles. Carrying the power from the diffs to the driveshafts are lightweight steel outdrives that are designed to lighten the rotating mass inside the drivetrain. We went with the kit suggested oils of 7000wt front, 5000wt centre and 2000wt rear for a standard starting point and to see how the standard set-up works out of the box.

SHOCKINGLY EASY..

The big bore shock absorbers are possibly the best we have ever built on a 1:8 off-road buggy. Using the basic internal bladder style of design with the bleed hole in the shock cap, LRP has made a set of shocks that even a child could manage to build with the perfect rebound match on the opposing shock first time! That is something that your writer has been unable to do with any shock set in all their racing years and normally it takes a couple of attempts to get it right. The pistons are beautifully machined, Teflon coated items that are tapered on one side for you to be able to tune the rebound/pack speeds. Kit oils are 30wt rear and 40wt front, although they did seem thin compared to our experience with other oils of the same weight. The 30wt had leaked in the bag, which was a surprise as the bottle is sealed under the cap, so there was only just enough to fill the rear shocks. Springs in the kit are their blue (naturally) medium grade for you to get a good starting point, although we can

SPEC: 4WD ALLOY CHASSIS **CLASS:** 1:8 OFF-ROAD COMPETITION **COST:** £449.99

see that our high grip AstroTurf tracks may need a harder front spring that are available separately.

ALLOY EVERYWHERE

There is a lot of alloy on the NXR, which is a good thing as it all adds to the strength and accuracy of the parts. The material is 7075 T6 aircraft grade aluminium for the chassis, shock towers, hinge pin holders, front caster blocks, steering arms and rear hubs. The 3mm chassis is referred to LRP's 'Perfect Flex' chassis with a slight lip on the edges and a hint of kick up on the front. It's cut with a narrowing profile to the front allowing the front-end to twist a little more than the rear giving a touch more bite. The hinge pin holders are designed with plastic inserts to use for adjustments to track width, anti-squat, kick-up and toe-in. LRP has gone with a more traditional upper arm at the front so the

The box maybe lacks a chassis pic, but for a competition product this is hardly an issue

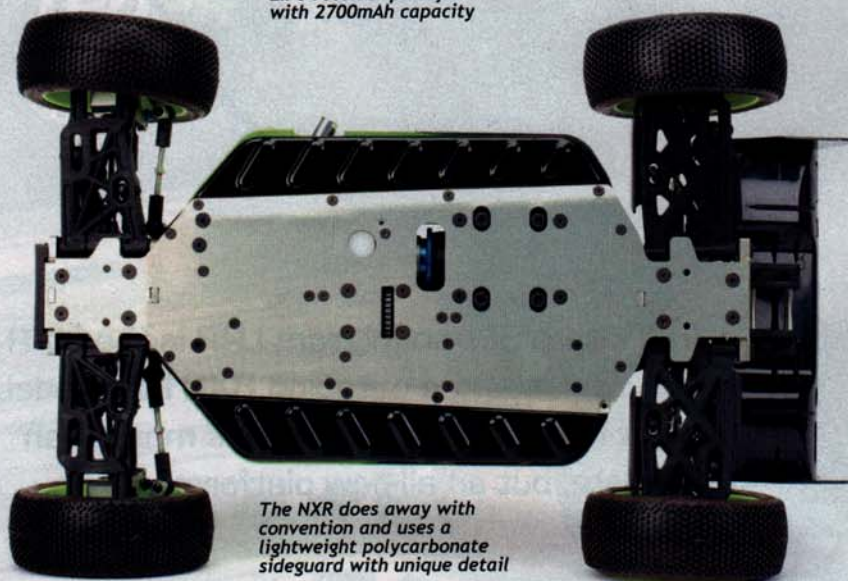
roll centre adjustments are controlled by the tower and not with inserts. The shock tower adjustment is ample for these cars. We sometimes think that you can get a little lost if there are too many things to change. The front hubs have moved on from the BXR's 'Active caster' design and are now a more typical C-hub design, which has been used successfully on many more 1:8 buggies by other manufacturers, although the trend now seems to be pivot ball hubs at the moment. So has LRP missed the boat on the current working trend, or have they gained an advantage by keeping with the tried and trusted design? Only time will tell.

RADIO CARBON

Steering away from the alloy radio brackets that have been used in the previous models, LRP now used carbon fibre for the radio tray, along with the centre diff mount brace and the front steering/gearbox brace. This adds strength and reduces weight to the chassis and at the same time lowering the centre of gravity, putting the heavy parts low down on the car. The receiver and battery are located in a couple of plastic boxes at the rear of the chassis that are taken from their BX RTR range.

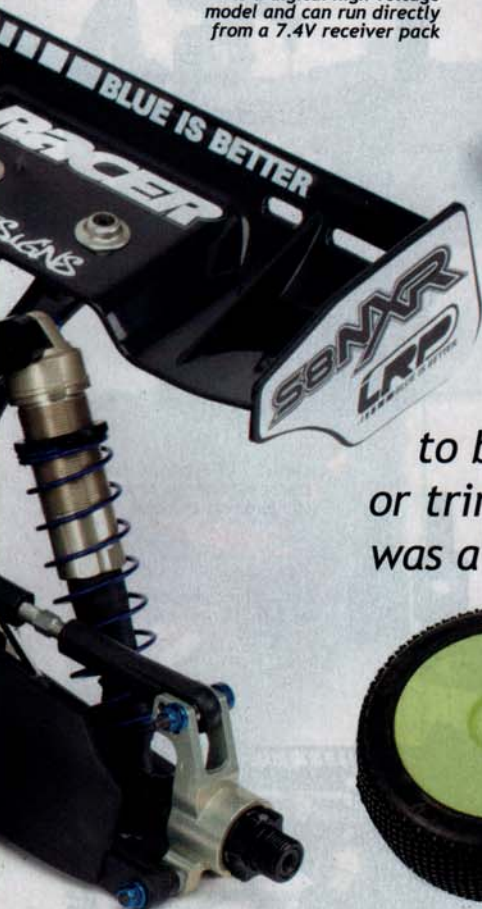


LRP kindly supplied the perfect LiPo receiver pack for the NXR with 2700mAh capacity



The NXR does away with convention and uses a lightweight polycarbonate sideguard with unique detail

Sanwa's waterproof ERS-962 is a digital high voltage model and can run directly from a 7.4V receiver pack



Racer Tips

One tip we have got is for the M4 screws, and turnbuckles. These can be a handful when screwing into the hard plastic of the gearbox casings. What you can do to ease the pain and blisters is to apply some of grease to the threads. This makes putting these parts together so much easier and speeds the process up no end. Some like to run the thread across a bar of soap too, but we think that the grease is a better option.

With regard to the recommended 15mm as a measurement for the steering turnbuckles, we found this to be too short. By the time we had the car set-up on the day they were nearer 30mm. We would suggest making sure that the threads are nicely tapped out to around 20mm length before undoing them back to around the 30mm mark. By tapping the linkages out adjustment will be so much easier in the future.

"Nothing had to be manipulated or trimmed to fit - it was a joy to build!"



No wheels are included with the NXR so we used a set of pre-mounted Pro-Line Revolver tyres



The Screamer-93 pipe and manifold is the preferred combo to match LRP's ZZ.21c engine



Fuel filter sits behind the splashguard that is incorporated into the tank's design



Alloy hubs and caster blocks are standard equipment on the NXR model



The carbon fibre brace supports the steering posts and rear of the front gearbox



Of course we had to install one of LRP's own popular engines - this is the ZZ.21c



The shocks feature anodised threaded bodies, with protective boots. No surprise to see blue springs (medium grade) included



The radio tray built up complete with top of the range Sanwa servos



Centre and front diff ready for the oil. There are differences in both the casing and the main gear

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Metal gears feature internally - note the conical cut of the main diff gear



Moulded inserts feature in the caster blocks to adjust the angle

Centre diff in place. Note the small springs to keep the pads off the disc

Left: The components of a front/rear diff

Four shock bodies along with one set of the parts that go into building one. Just add oil!



ON TEST

For the test we were booked in for the Midland Astro Masters series that runs through the winter at the excellent Coventry Model Car Club. With ice on the car when we set off in the morning, we knew it was going to be a cold day...but was quite happily wrong. The sun was out and it got pretty warm as the day went on. The track quickly lost its morning dew and was pretty much dry after the first couple of heats had circulated. With the engine heated up we put the car on the SMD starter box and she purred into life first time. Now, we have no doubt that the set-up that the car is constructed with is mainly for dirt tracks, so we weren't expecting it to go out and be perfect on an AstroTurf track. In round one we put the car down on the track with the set-up as the build recommended. Straight away our suspicions about the shock oil being thin were confirmed. Every time the car had to slow down for a corner the car just nose-dived on the front suspension. With the kit medium spring and the kit oil they just couldn't hold the front up enough and the result was 21st in round. So the first thing to do was to change the front shock oil. We replaced the kit 40wt with our own oil of the same grade but in our normal, preferred brand. With the change of oil and also a change to mini pin tyres now that the track had dried fully, the car felt better in round two. But it still nose dived on the front and was now prone to

grip roll as the traction came up so sadly no improvement. Therefore we went back and really thickened the front up. The medium spring just wasn't up to the grip of the AstroTurf tracks, and with no spring options to hand we went extreme and thickened up to 100wt in an attempt to stop the front suspension compressing so much as the car slowed for the corners and turned in. We altered the shock angles too, to help stiffen it up. In the third round the car felt more balanced this time with less diving into the corners. The driver still couldn't push how they wanted so a 28th in round put us 30th overall. Into the final and starting from the back is always easier as you've got nothing to lose. So as the flag dropped, the driver nailed it and by the second lap had gone from tenth to fifth, so things were looking good and in the cooler conditions the car felt even more balanced as the grip dropped. It was becoming easy to pass people as the race progressed so we were feeling confident of a bump-up into the B final. As we turned into the fast first corner the car dived on the front again and we weren't able to catch it as it grip rolled and as the car landed upside down it snapped the front gearbox housing where the shock tower mounts...race over. It was a shame because the car felt good in the final, but with me pushing harder it was probably just a touch too much with that set up.



Like other 1:8 competition buggies, the design is very modular



The blue theme is evident throughout, and we even used some blue-coloured oil for the air filter!



The servos are securely fastened to the carbon fibre radio tray

■ An addition to the radio tray is the carbon bracket which can hold the receiver pack near the front of the chassis so that you can alter the weight bias and balance the chassis for differing track conditions. It is a tight fit and the LRP receiver pack we had was little on the chunky side and only just squeezed in, but do watch the wire on the cells though as it could be easy to slice them on the carbon plate. This is nothing a little bit of filing can't sort. On the opposite side of the chassis is the fuel tank which is 125cc and BRCA legal and comes with a very neat, moulded gauge on the top of it so that when you have finished your run you can just stand the car on its nose and see quickly how much fuel there is remaining in the tank.

BODY BEAUTIFUL?

Our opinion is that the body design is OK, but not the best looking we have seen. Although when it's had a bit of paint thrown at it, it's not as bad as it first seems. The thing that put us off is the fact that there was a lot of excess Lexan on the moulding and it made it look like a bit of a jelly mould. Once cut out it does get nearer to how an 1:8 shell should look. But it still sits a little high for our own liking

It is nice to see LRP include handy rear mudguards on the NXR



Black wheelbase spacer and white hub insert. The hinge pin is safely secured with a locknut

and with a smaller more low-profile air filter, the shell could drop a centimetre or so exposing the engine head a little more to aid cooling. Comparing it to some others at the race meeting, the side pods are quite high, but this is because the other cars shells are contoured around the things inside them, giving the impression of being lower. So all in all, it's OK and the bodylines are complimented with a neat rear wing in black.

ADDITIONS

For the test we were provided with the excellent four-port, 2.97hp, ceramic bearing LRP ZZ.21C Engine and matching up to the engine is a Screamer-93 EFRA exhaust to make up a perfect power plant. Once the engine was run in, we adjusted the carb throughout the race meeting and as the day went on the engine got better and better. By the time the finals came round it was singing beautifully and was incredibly nice to drive. We also had an LRP LiPo 2700mAh receiver pack to give loads of runtime on a single charge. This powers the Sanwa RX-452 receiver that we used and the two Sanwa ERS-962 waterproof super fast servos, all controlled by a top of the range Sanwa Exzes Z transmitter. ■

SPECIFICATION

Model:	LRP S8 NXR
Scale:	1:8
Class:	Off-Road
Application:	Competition
Format:	Kit
Power:	Nitro
Chassis:	Alloy
Drivetrain:	4WD
Transmission:	Shaft
Differentials:	Geared
Shocks:	Oil-filled/threaded bodied
Bearings/Bushes:	Bearings

TECHNICAL DATA

Length:	500mm
Width:	305mm
Height:	180mm
Wheelbase:	322-327mm
Front track:	302mm
Rear track:	306mm
Weight:	3300g

WHAT WE USED - Nitro Kit

TRANSMITTER:	SANWA EXZES Z 2.4GHZ STICK
RECEIVER:	SANWA RX-452 2.4GHZ
STEERING SERVO:	SANWA ERS-962 WATERPROOF
THROTTLE/BRAKE SERVO:	SANWA ERS-962 WATERPROOF
ENGINE:	LRP XTEC ZZ.21C CERAMIC SPEC.2
PIPE:	LRP SCREAMER-93 EFRA
RECEIVER PACK:	LRP 2700MAH 7.4V LIPO
FUEL:	BYRON
STARTER BOX:	SMD V.2

OPTIONAL PARTS

- 134082 FRONT SWAY BAR SET
- 134083 REAR SWAY BAR SET
- 134506 FRONT SPRING (SILVER/SOFT)
- 134507 REAR SPRING (SILVER/SOFT)
- 134510 FRONT SPRING (BLACK/HARD)
- 134511 REAR SPRING (BLACK/HARD)

VERDICT

- ➕ Beautifully engineered
Everything just falls into place
- ➖ Body sits a little high

RACER RATING

★★★★★

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SUMMARY

We will be back for the next round and this time we will be armed with the harder front spring set and will probably change from the kit eight-hole pistons to the six-hole option. Once the diving/compression issue has been solved the car will be awesome to race. We had some big crashes during the day too, testing its strength to its limits and apart from the final, there were no issues with breakages at all. We are looking forward to running this car throughout this winter series as we are sure it will just get better and better as we tune it into our Astro surface.

TEST SESSION

WHAT: LRP DEEP BLUE 420 RACE

Race Ready



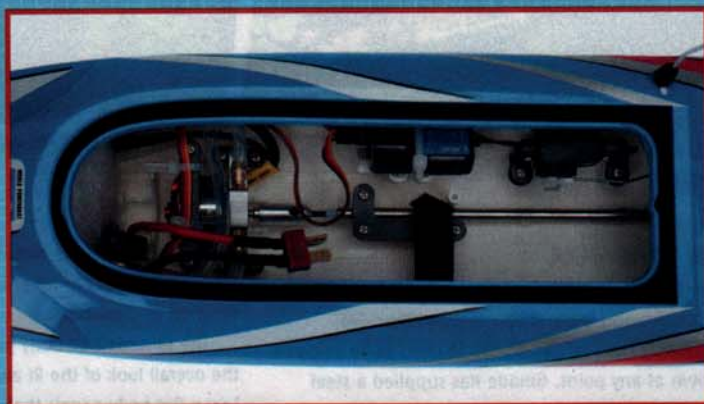
The Deep Blue 420 is the first boat from LRP to include the term Race in its title, and with a powerful brushless and 11.1V LiPo capability it sure looks like fast fun. But what did we really think when we took it out on the water?

Racer has enjoyed the two previous releases from LRP's Deep Blue range of boats. Firstly we had the LRP Deep Blue One that we put to the test in the September 2012 issue, which was a brushed powered 330mm long chassis that featured a combined 27MHz receiver/electronic speed control unit. Then less than a year later we got our hands on the Deep Blue 450 that as the name suggests, was a bigger hulled model with more power. And now we have the 420 model with a hull in between the two earlier models, but this one is equipped with a brushless package capable of running a 3S or 11.1V LiPo. After we experienced the performance of the two brushed predecessors, we were looking forward to even more speed from the brushless motor and sharp handling

from the short hull too, which is a win-win in our minds.

THE HULL THING

So let's look at the package starting with the boat first. The hull is made from ABS plastic and the hatch fitted correctly provides a sealed unit for the electrics and equipment located inside. As the removable hatch provides a watertight seal, the rescue function for the boat comes into its own allowing it to be easily righted again after capsizing. At the rear are the turn fins and trim tabs that are made out of stainless steel and these stabilise the boat when it comes to high-speed turns. We did note that the turning fins are finished with an almost blade-type edge so please be careful, especially if you have young children around!



Inside the hull shows that there is actually quite a bit of space. The battery is held in place by Velcro with a strap for added security



A Deans-type connector is used to connect the LRP LiPo to the speed control





To make the Deep Blue 420 Race turn left and right you need a rudder and this one comes with a sturdy CNC machined aluminium item that will make it responsive enough for fast tight turns, relying on the fins and the rest of the hull's design to remain stable.

45KPH PERFORMANCE

Enabling the 420 Race to achieve a claimed speed of 45kph, the power comes from a water cooled 2900KV brushless outrunner motor installed and this is controlled by 30A unit that too is water cooled so you don't have to worry about temps inside the sealed hull, and this package is optimised for a 3S

The hatch locates at the front and is secured with a neat clip that seals it in place



"The motor powers the boat to unbelievable 45kph"



The receiver is located on one side of the propshaft...



...with the servo behind it



One of the turning fins

LiPo set-up. A 2.4GHz radio is used for the first time and is naturally a big step up from the old 27MHz unit that graced the Deep Blue One and

Deep Blue 450 models.

There are two standout features of the model that we particularly like and the first is the battery warning system. This warns you as soon as the battery starts to get close to empty and allows the driver enough time to bring the boat back to the shore. The second is the aforementioned rescue function that allows the boat can be righted after capsizing via the transmitter.

BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED

As this is an ARR or Almost Ready-to-Run model, you will need a suitable battery so we grabbed a couple of LRP's 3S 11.1V LiPo batteries and a capable charger to get us up and going. For the record the recommended battery is #430450 LRP Deep Blue 420 Race Expert Line LiPo and this is a 1800mAh capacity 3S 11.1V battery.

The RRP on the 420 Race is £131.99 and means that this is unlikely to be an impulse buy, but with its stated high-performance it looks like a lot of fun so we headed

out to the local boating lake to put it to the test...

ON TEST

So how did it go? Well in a few short words, the 420 Race is fast, exciting and huge fun! The boat is so fast that even a little throttle application sees a massive rooster out of the back of the hull as the nose lift and the power of the 3X LiPo and brushless motor kicks in. At full speed the motor really sings as the attitude changes and the boat adopts a high speed attacking attitude to clear water ahead of it. If we are honest, you do need a reasonable amount of water to run the boat and achieve its full potential. But we were glad to have two packs of LiPos to use as after one run it was just not enough.

OVERALL

We enjoyed the running making high-speed passes mixed with aggressive turns to test the 420 Race to its limit. It maybe small but the package puts a massive smile on the driver's face, and this is certainly a step up in terms of performance



The fins, tabs, prop and machined anodised alloy rudder

compared to its older siblings in the form of the One and 450 models. This one is going to get some abuse in the coming months, as long as the local council doesn't drain the pond of course...

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With the 420 Race you get a 2.4GHz transmitter